

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT
AND CAREER OF JAMES "JIM"
NISSEN

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of the career and retirement of James "Jim" Nissen. After twenty-six years as La Crosse District Manager of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and nearly 39 years with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mr. Nissen announced his retirement on January second 2015.

Nissen held seasonal positions with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Nebraska, Illinois, Missouri, Minnesota, and South Dakota. He also held permanent positions in Indiana, Vermont, Utah, and Wisconsin. Each station offered new opportunities and challenges and developed his career from a student trainee to Refuge Manager.

Mr. Nissen is not a native of the La Crosse, WI area, but according to his colleagues, "no one knows this refuge better than he does." Nissen grew up in a duck hunting family in northeastern Nebraska, not far from the Platte River and among the prairie pothole country that produces much of the continent's canvasback ducks. Jim's career followed this regal bird across the country and in 1989, Nissen came to the La Crosse District after two years of overseeing the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on the eastern side of Wisconsin. The Horicon position marked his return to Wisconsin; Nissen had been there in 1976 for the Canada goose dispersal program, where he not only helped manage the goose population, but also met his wife Ruth.

The La Crosse position offered Nissen the chance to get back to a river-based assignment—his true passion. Nissen fell in love with the abundance of canvasbacks, also referred to as "the king of ducks," that the Upper Mississippi River and La Crosse area boast during fall migration. "I like rivers and canvasbacks and people," Nissen said, "so it was a good fit."

Each fall, the Upper Mississippi River allows Nissen to see nearly half of the world's canvasback population pass by his window during migration. "It really is a world-class spectacle," Nissen said.

During his tenure at LaCrosse, Jim received numerous awards and accolades including the Meritorious Service Award of the Department of the Interior in 2007. He has overseen multi-million dollar habitat enhancement projects funded through the Environmental Management Program; he has acquired over 2,500 acres of lands for inclusion in the National Wildlife Refuge; he has overseen the construction of a LEED certified Visitor Center and office; and he is regarded as a leader in wetland and waterfowl ecology and management.

Jim's departure will create a profound void in the Upper Miss' institutional knowledge. His

energy, wisdom, humor, innate ability to remember dates, and his many discussions will be missed terribly by all who worked alongside him. I wish both Jim, Ruth, and their son Travis all the best in the years to come.

**MARGO NIELSEN—EMBODIMENT
OF SERVICE**

HON. JOHN RATCLIFFE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Speaker, one of the most rewarding parts of my job is seeing the extraordinary work that constituents do giving back to their communities every single day.

They don't do it for fame, and they don't do it for glory. They do it because they want to make a difference. No one person embodies this spirit of service better than Margo Nielsen.

During her 25 years at the helm of Helping Hands, the organization has seen tremendous growth and helped tens of thousands of people by ensuring that essential health and emergency services are available to everyone in Rockwall County.

Margo—congratulations on your remarkable career. Your leadership will be missed, but your legacy not soon forgotten. Thank you all for joining me in honoring Margo and supporting Helping Hands. God Bless.

**CELEBRATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY
OF CHILDREN ON THE
GREEN**

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Children on the Green located in Morristown, New Jersey as it celebrates its 20th Anniversary.

In 1994, twenty years ago, a special organization opened its doors with the goal of serving others. Not just serving others, but serving others who were not as fortunate as themselves, specifically children. Since its opening, Children on the Green of Morristown has met the childcare needs of nearly 400 families from area shelters. This was possible through the organizations longstanding partnerships with Homeless Solutions, the Jersey Battered Women's Services and Family Promise of Morris County.

Children on the Green, located behind the United Methodist Church, works to provide safe and nurturing care to children whose parents are struggling to provide for them because they are in need of housing, education, and/or employment. While the parents work to better their families' situation, Children on the Green is a safe place for the children to go where they're taken care of by people who

truly care. Their mission is to support the developmental needs of each child and create an interdependent partnership between home, work, community, and the center.

Early childhood education has a value that cannot be measured. Research has shown significant gaps in early development between children of the lowest socioeconomic status and those in the highest, which have been shown to start as early as nine months of age. The main contribution to this problem is access to good quality early childhood education.

Children on the Green has a philosophy that states, "Every child deserves access to a quality early education program like Children on the Green, irrespective of their means." This organization strives every day to lower the achievement gap by providing quality early childhood education to those children in need.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing 20 years of outstanding service by Children on the Green, their directors, board of trustees and staff. Organizations like this are bettering the lives of the children not just in Morristown, New Jersey, but across the country.

**CONGRATULATING HARPER COLLEGE
ON ITS NEW CAREER AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER**

HON. ROBERT J. DOLD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I am excited to recognize Harper Community College in Palatine, IL, which will be opening its new Career and Technical Education Center on January 23. This new building, with state-of-the-art classrooms and labs, will house some of Harper's fastest-growing technical programs such as manufacturing, welding, architectural technology, heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), maintenance technology, law enforcement, and fire science.

Programs in this building will help provide students with the skills they will need in the future. These programs will help put people to work and support local employers who are seeking a highly-skilled workforce to compete in the 21st Century global economy.

The building will also house Harper's innovative Advanced Manufacturing Program. The program partners with 75 area manufacturing companies which offer paid internships to manufacturing students attending Harper College.

I applaud the Harper College community on the opening of its new Career and Technical Education Center, and I look forward to its continued leadership in bringing educational opportunities to students in the 10th District.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

AGGIES IN WWI

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in the trenches of the Argonne Forrest in north-eastern France, sat thousands of allied troops. It was the fall of 1918, it was World War I. The battle was muddy, rainy and most of all it was bloody. It was one of the largest and deadliest battles in U.S. military history, involving over a million American soldiers. Among the masses, in the front line trenches, sat James Vernon "Pinky" Wilson, a marine from Texas, who amidst chaos felt called to write what would become one of the most famous songs in college history, the Aggie War Hymn.

Pinky Wilson grew up in the small Texas town of Florence, about 30 miles north of Austin. In 1917, he was a junior enrolled at Texas A&M University when he volunteered to serve our country in World War I.

Wilson fought with the 6th Marine Regiment and by choice he became buck private in the Marine Corps, turning down two commissions, remaining a buck private throughout his military career. Not long after joining his Marine outfit as a replacement, Wilson saw firsthand the rigorous and relentless fighting in the Champagne area of France.

In November of 1918, Wilson found himself right in the middle of the Battle of the Argonne Forrest. By the time Wilson took his first muddy spot in the trenches, the battle had been waging on for 37 days. For the remaining days, the Germans gave everything they had, fighting to the death. Knowing that the end was near, the Germans were desperate to try and steer the war in their favor.

They bombarded and pelted the Marines with infantry, artillery, and machine gun fire. While sitting in the foxhole watching this bloodbath unfold before him, Wilson was struck with an idea. In an interview with the San Antonio Express-News in 1975, Wilson recalled that it was during the Champagne battle he had a running idea of writing a song. A fight song that a quartet would sing for Texas A&M. He took out a pencil and some letters from home and began scribbling the lines of the song that would become one of the most recognizable songs in Texas history.

Wilson sat with his lyrics in the trenches until the war was over. Since he wrote the song and knew it perfectly in his head, melody, lyrics and all, he never bothered to keep the original copy he wrote. The tenor of the War Hymn as it was officially named, takes digs at the arch rival of Texas A&M, the University of Texas Longhorns.

By the time the Battle of the Argonne Forrest was over, it had been a 47 day nightmare that the allies were able to wake up from. And they woke up victorious, the war was over. The bloody battle that began on September 26, 1918, concluded World War I. It lasted until the Armistice, on November 11, 1918.

What is remarkable about the class of 1917 at Texas A&M University is that they all volunteered to serve our country. Some as officers and some as enlisted men. These men went on to fight in World War I to serve and protect America and her freedoms. They were the fathers of the Greatest Generation.

They came back and had families, instilling the same sense of selfless service in their

sons and younger generation. When World War II started, the entire graduating classes of 1941 and 1942 at Texas A&M University did the exact same thing; they all volunteered to serve our country.

The Aggies at A&M have a long tradition of service to the military. A&M commissions so many officers into our military that the number rivals our service academies.

Much like the writing of our Star Spangled Banner, the Aggie War Hymn was born from a place of true patriotism during a time of pure terror and a fight for freedom. While the original version that Wilson wrote had a first verse, the second verse makes up the war hymn. And still, almost 100 years later, this second verse marks one of the most notable and famous A&M traditions. After the war, Wilson eventually returned to A&M to earn a degree and graduate with the class of 1920. He went on to become a successful Texas Rancher.

His alma mater will be forever grateful for his contribution to not only his school, but to the State of Texas and his country.

To quote the Aggie War Hymn, "Rough tough, real stuff, Texas A&M,"—those Aggies who fought in WWI, WWII and those who have served and are currently serving our country embody this line to the fullest extent.

James Vernon "Pinky" Wilson is one of the remarkable men who answered the call of his country. There truly are none quite like the Texas A&M Aggies.

The Aggie spirit is engrained and rooted deep into Texas A&M. They are hard core patriots, committed cadets and forever rivals of the University of Texas. They are and will always be the pulse of Texas A&M. Gig 'em.

And that's just the way it is.

THE AGGIE WAR HYMN

(By Pinky Wilson)

Hullabaloo, Caneck! Caneck!
Hullabaloo, Caneck! Caneck!

FIRST VERSE

All hail to dear old Texas A&M
Rally around Maroon and White
Good luck to dear old Texas Aggies
They are the boys who show the real old fight

That good old Aggie spirit thrills us
And makes us yell and yell and yell
So let's fight for dear old Texas A&M
We're going to beat you all to
Chig-gar-roo-gar-rem
Chig-gar-roo-gar-rem

Rough Tough! Real Stuff! Texas A&M!

SECOND VERSE

Good-bye to Texas university
So long to the orange and the white
Good luck to dear old Texas Aggies
They are the boys that show the real old fight

"The eyes of Texas are upon you . . ."

That is the song they sing so well
So good-bye to Texas university
We're going to beat you all to
Chig-gar-roo-gar-rem
Chig-gar-roo-gar-rem
Rough Tough! Real Stuff! Texas A&M!

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT
OF BERNARD "BERNY" BALKONIS

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of the retirement of Bernard "Berny" Frank

Balkonis, Jr. Mr. Balkonis was Vice President of Sales for Prairie Estates Genetics of Middleton, Wisconsin. Mr. Balkonis' retirement at the end of 2014 marked the conclusion of a 40 year career in the seed corn industry. The President of Prairie Estates Genetics, Ron Rogers, affirmed that Balkonis leaves a robust legacy as a fantastic mentor to forage managers and a valued member of the Prairie Estates Genetics team.

Mr. Balkonis graduated from University of Wisconsin-River Falls in 1975, working on dairy farms in the summer and during holiday breaks to make his way through school. After graduation and marriage to his high school sweetheart, Mr. Balkonis was recruited by Farm Supply (Growmark), and managed a store location in northern Illinois for five years. After his time with Farm Supply, he then joined PAG Seeds, a division of Cargill. During his time with PAG Seeds, Mr. Balkonis worked as a territory manager in southwest Michigan. After PAG Seeds, Paymaster, and Cargill combined to create Cargill Hybrid Seeds, Balkonis was moved to northern Michigan, where he became both territory manager and assistant district manager. While located throughout Michigan, Mr. Balkonis and his wife welcomed three sons into the world.

In 1992, Mr. Balkonis was promoted within Cargill Hybrid Seeds to area manager for the eastern United States. Then, in 1996, Mr. Balkonis assumed the position of area manager for the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois and moved his family to Holmen, Wisconsin. In 2000, when Cargill Hybrid Seeds sold to Dow (becoming the entity Mycogen), Mr. Balkonis remained on as area manager. After his time as area manager with Mycogen, Mr. Balkonis took on the responsibilities of VP of Sales for Prairie Estates Genetics, where he would spend the rest of his career and begin the transition to the new role of grandparent with the birth of his first grandson Efram.

Mr. Balkonis will retire with his wife of 40 years, Claudia, in Trempealeau, Wisconsin, just 10 miles north of Holmen where they raised their three sons, Adam, Scott and Wade. I wish to extend the best of wishes to Berny as he steps into retirement and that next great adventure.

IN HONOR OF MAJOR CHAD ERIN
LAMPHERE

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Major Chad Erin Lamphere, an American hero who valiantly served his country while serving in the United States Army.

Chad was born on August 24, 1973 on a small family farm in Arkansaw, WI. Displaying a warm heart at a young age, Chad helped his family raise dogs, cats, pigs, and goats, while also contributing and giving back to his community through partaking in 4-H. Chad quickly rose to the top of his academic classes, graduating with two degrees and as Valedictorian from Hartnell College, and later attending UCLA for pre-medical courses, in which he graduated Summa Cum Laude.